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U.S. PATENT APPLICATION

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Invention: RECEPTACLE

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SPECIFICATION

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

RECEPTACLE

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is related to Japanese application
5 No.2002-233740 filed on August 9, 2002, whose priority is claimed
under 35 USC § 119, the disclosure of which is incorporated by
reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

10 The present invention relates to a receptacle, more
particularly, to a receptacle for use in an electronic apparatus such
as a DVD player, a TV set, an STB, an AV receiver, a personal
computer, a PDA or a cellular phone.

2. Description of the Related Art

15 Conventionally known receptacles typically comprise a
housing having a reception port for receiving an optical signal
transmission plug, and a photoelectric converter housed in the
housing for transferring and receiving an optical signal to/from the
optical signal transmission plug.

20 Such a receptacle generally has terminals extending from
the photoelectric converter out of the housing through
through-holes formed in a printed circuit board. The terminals
are soldered to the printed circuit board, whereby the receptacle is
fixed onto the printed circuit board.

25 Various receptacle fixing methods and structures have

been conceived for more easily and assuredly fixing the receptacle on the printed circuit board.

An exemplary receptacle fixing method hitherto known is such that a receptacle (connector) is temporarily fixed to a printed circuit board by a screw by means of a fixing jig and permanently
5 fixed to the printed circuit board by soldering terminals to the printed circuit board (see, for example, Japanese Unexamined Patent Publication No. 11-167966 (1999)).

An exemplary receptacle fixing structure hitherto known is
10 such that a metal pin projecting upright from a printed circuit board is press-fitted in a hole formed in a fixing portion of a receptacle (connector) and then heated to be fuse-bonded to the fixing portion (see, for example, Japanese Unexamined Patent Publication No. 2000-56186).

15 In general, the plug is repeatedly connected to and disconnected from the receptacle fixed to the printed circuit board. For the connection and disconnection of the plug, the plug should be inserted into the receptacle exactly in a predetermined insertion direction and withdrawn from the receptacle exactly in a
20 predetermined withdrawal direction. However, the plug is often forcibly inserted into and withdrawn from the receptacle in directions not conforming to the predetermined insertion and withdrawal directions thereby to distort the receptacle.

The forcible insertion and withdrawal of the plug exert
25 stresses on soldered portions of the terminals and, in the worst

case, the soldered portions are cracked to cause a connection failure. Therefore, there is a demand for a receptacle fixing structure which exerts no stress on the soldered portions of the terminals even if the plug is forcibly inserted into or withdrawn
5 from the receptacle.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In view of the foregoing, the present invention is directed to a receptacle which suppresses a stress exerted on a soldered portion of a terminal thereof when a plug is forcibly inserted into
10 or withdrawn from the receptacle.

In accordance with the present invention, there is provided a receptacle which comprises: a housing placed on a printed circuit board and having an insertion hole for receiving an optical signal transmission plug; a photoelectric converter housed in the housing
15 for transferring an optical signal with respect to the received optical signal transmission plug; and an elongate metal member covering the housing for fixing the housing onto the printed circuit board; the housing having a positioning recess formed in a peripheral surface portion thereof not opposed to the printed
20 circuit board as having a shape complementary to that of the elongate member, and a flange overhanging the positioning recess; wherein the elongate member is fixedly fitted in the positioning recess in engagement with the flange; wherein the elongate member has projections respectively projecting from opposed
25 portions thereof with the housing held between the opposed

portions, and the projections respectively extend through through-holes formed in the printed circuit board and soldered to the printed circuit board.

That is, the inventive receptacle includes the elongate member covering the housing for fixing the housing onto the printed circuit board, and the elongate member is fixedly fitted in the positioning recess having the shape complementary to that of the elongate member in engagement with the flange.

Therefore, the elongate member is assuredly fixed to the housing with respect to a plug insertion direction and a direction perpendicular to the insertion direction. Even if a plug is forcibly inserted into or withdrawn from the receptacle, the elongate member is less likely to be disengaged from the housing. Hence, the housing is firmly fixed onto the printed circuit board.

As a result, stresses exerted on soldered portions of terminals of the receptacle are minimized.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a front view of a receptacle according to a first embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a plan view of the receptacle shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a left side view of the receptacle shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 4 is a rear view of the receptacle shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 5 is a sectional view taken along a line A-A in Fig. 3;

Fig. 6 is a front view of an elongate member used in the receptacle according to the first embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 7 is a left side view of the elongate member shown in Fig. 6; and

Fig. 8 is a front view of a receptacle according to a second embodiment of the present invention.

5 **DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS**

A receptacle according to the present invention comprises:
a housing placed on a printed circuit board and having an
insertion hole for receiving an optical signal transmission plug; a
photoelectric converter housed in the housing for transferring and
10 receiving an optical signal to/from the received optical signal
transmission plug; and an elongate metal member covering the
housing for fixing the housing onto the printed circuit board; the
housing having a positioning recess formed in a peripheral surface
portion thereof not opposed to the printed circuit board as having a
15 shape complementary to that of the elongate member, and a flange
overhanging the positioning recess; wherein the elongate member
is fixedly fitted in the positioning recess in engagement with the
flange; wherein the elongate member has projections respectively
projecting from opposed portions thereof with the housing held
20 between the opposed portions, and the projections respectively
extend through through-holes formed in the printed circuit board
and soldered to the printed circuit board.

In the inventive receptacle, the optical signal transmission
plug has the same configuration as optical signal transmission
25 plugs commonly used for general electronic apparatuses. The

housing is composed of a resin, and has a cubic or cuboidal external shape. The photoelectric converter housed in the housing is adapted to convert an optical signal inputted from the plug into an electrical signal and output the electrical signal.

- 5 Alternatively, the photoelectric converter is adapted to convert an electrical signal inputted from a circuit of the printed circuit board into an optical signal and output the optical signal.

The elongate metal member comprises a plate of aluminum, iron or copper, which is curved or bent in conformity with the
10 external shape of the housing. Where the housing has a cubic or cuboidal shape, for example, the elongate member has an open square shape as seen in section.

The positioning recess of the housing has a shape complementary to the external shape of the elongate member for
15 positioning the elongate member with respect to the housing in engagement with the elongate member. The flange overhangs the positioning recess to at least partly cover the positioning recess. The position and overhanging extent of the flange are properly determined so as to facilitate the engagement of the elongate
20 member and prevent the disengagement of the elongate member from the flange. For example, the flange may project from one side edge of the positioning recess as covering a part of the positioning recess.

In the inventive receptacle, the elongate member may have
25 through-holes respectively formed in the vicinity of the projections

for preventing a solder from climbing along the elongate member.
With this arrangement, the solder climbing along the elongate
member can be trapped in the through-holes for preventing the
solder from further climbing ahead of the through-holes when the
5 projections are soldered to the printed circuit board. As a result,
the reliability of the receptacle can be improved when the
receptacle is mounted on the printed circuit board.

In the inventive receptacle, the projections may
respectively project from opposite ends of the elongate member
10 longitudinally of the elongate member. Alternatively, the
projections may respectively project from side edge portions of the
elongate member perpendicularly to the length of the elongate
member.

That is, a face of the housing to be fitted on the printed
15 circuit board (to be opposed to the printed circuit board) can be
changed without changing the engagement relationship between
the housing and the elongate member by properly changing the
projecting direction of the projections.

In accordance with another aspect of the present invention,
20 there is provided an electronic apparatus comprising the aforesaid
inventive receptacle.

Next, receptacles according to embodiments of the present
invention will be described in detail with reference to the attached
drawings. In the following embodiments, like components are
25 denoted by like reference characters.

First embodiment

Fig. 1 is a front view of a receptacle according to a first embodiment of the present invention. Figs. 2, 3 and 4 are a plan view, a left side view and a rear view, respectively, of the receptacle shown in Fig. 1. Fig. 5 is a sectional view taken along a line A-A in Fig. 3. Fig. 6 is a front view of an elongate member employed in the receptacle according to the first embodiment, and Fig. 7 is a left side view of the elongate member shown in Fig. 6.

As shown in Figs. 1 to 5, the receptacle 1 according to the first embodiment includes a housing 2 placed on a printed circuit board 10 and having an insertion hole 2a for receiving an optical signal transmission plug (not shown), a photoelectric converter 5 housed in the housing 2 for transferring an optical signal with respect to the received optical signal transmission plug, and an elongate metal member 3 covering the housing 2 for fixing the housing 2 onto the printed circuit board 10. The housing 2 has a positioning recess 2b formed in a peripheral surface portion thereof not opposed to the printed circuit board 10 as having a shape complementary to that of the elongate member 3, and flanges 2c overhanging the positioning recess 2b. The elongate member 3 is fixedly fitted in the positioning recess 2b in engagement with the flanges 2c. The elongate member 3 has projections 3a respectively projecting from opposed portions thereof with the housing 2 held between the opposed portions. The projections 3a respectively extend through through-holes 11 formed in the printed circuit

board 10 and soldered to the printed circuit board 10.

As shown in Figs. 1 and 4, three terminals 4 extending from the photoelectric converter 5 project from a face of the housing 2 to be fitted on the printed circuit board 10, and soldered to a circuit of the printed circuit board 10. As shown in Fig. 3, the elongate member 3 has through-holes 3b formed in the vicinity of the projections 3a. Thus, a melted solder climbing along the projections 3a can be trapped in the through-holes 3b so as to be prevented from further climbing along the elongate member when the receptacle is soldered to the printed circuit board. The projections 3a respectively project from opposite ends of the elongate member 3 longitudinally of the elongate member 3.

The elongate member 3 per se has a shape as shown in Figs. 6 and 7. The elongate member 3 is fixedly fitted in the positioning recess 2b of the housing 2 in engagement with the flanges 2c as shown in Figs. 2 to 5.

Therefore, the elongate member 3 is assuredly fixed to the housing 2 with respect to both a plug insertion direction F1 (see Fig. 3) in which the optical signal transmission plug is inserted in to the housing 2 and a direction F2 perpendicular to the insertion direction (see Fig. 4).

As a result, the housing 2 is firmly fixed to the printed circuit board 10 by the elongate member 3. Therefore, no excessive stress is exerted on soldered portions of the terminals 4 when the optical signal transmission plug is forcibly inserted into

or withdrawn from the receptacle.

Second embodiment

Fig. 8 is a front view of a receptacle according to a second embodiment of the present invention.

5 As shown in Fig. 8, the receptacle 21 according to the second embodiment has substantially the same construction as the receptacle 1 of the first embodiment, except that the positions and projecting directions of projections and terminals of the receptacle 21 are different from the positions and projecting directions of the
10 projections 3a and terminals 4 of the receptacle 1.

 In the receptacle 21 according to the second embodiment, an elongate member 23 has projections 23a projecting from side edge portions thereof perpendicularly to the length of the elongate member 23. Terminals 24 of the receptacle 21 project in the same
15 directions as the projections 23a.

 That is, the face of the housing to be fitted on the printed circuit board 10 (to be opposed to the printed circuit board 10) can be changed from that according to the first embodiment without changing the engagement relationship between the housing 2 (22)
20 and the elongate member 3 (23) by changing the positions and projecting directions of the projections 3a (23a) and the terminals 4 (24).

 According to the present invention, the receptacle includes the elongate member covering the housing for fixing the housing
25 onto the printed circuit board. The elongate member is fixedly

fitted in the positioning recess having a shape complementary to that of the elongate member in engagement with the flange. Thus, the elongate member is assuredly fixed to the housing with respect to both the plug insertion direction and the direction perpendicular to the insertion direction, and is less liable to be disengaged from the housing even if the plug is forcibly inserted into or withdrawn from the housing. Therefore, the housing is firmly fixed to the printed circuit board. As a result, the stresses exerted on the soldered portions of the terminals are reduced.

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